



**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

August 8, 2017

Senator Ricardo Lara
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1479 (Bonta) – Public Records: Civil Penalties – OPPOSED UNLESS AMENDED

Dear Senator Lara:

On behalf of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA), representing more than 1,600 businesses and 4,000 commercial and residential property owners within the two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Downtown Long Beach, we oppose Assembly Bill 1479, unless amended.

The bill would place additional burdens on private non-profit organizations that adhere to the California Public Records Act (CPRA). While we appreciate the amendments placed on the bill during the July 11 Senate Judiciary Committee meeting, we feel additional amendments are needed to protect non-profit, community-based organizations who remain vulnerable to abuse of the CPRA.

As it currently stands, the CPRA already provides legal remedies to requestors who feel there have been obstacles. The responsibility of fulfilling these requests falls upon one or two individuals that are often stretched to their limits. We are required by law to respond to all CPRA requests but there must also be recognition of the significant burden these requests have, in particular serial abuse of the CPRA.

In addition, the civil penalty provision would create a real economic incentive for those that abuse CPRA, not only seek the penalty, but to also seek attorney's fees and court costs. Thus serial abuse of CPRAs will not only have a negative impact on staff time, but the provision would create undue financial burden on BID organizations that have limited financial resources.

As a Property Based Improvement Districts and a Downtown Parking Improvement Area our core mission is to improve and enhance the environment and economy of Downtown Long Beach. Whether it be through our efforts to provide a clean and safe urban core or the promotion of Downtown Long Beach as destination through our signature events and economic development activities, we play a key role in bridging the gap between the public and private sectors. While we receive limited public funding, and work closely with city and county representatives, we do not hold the same land use authority, do not issue permits, nor do we oversee the core public safety services provided by those public agencies. Our role is one of investment, promotion and revitalization within Downtown Long Beach, and one primarily funded by private sources.

The DLBA fully supports transparency within local government and the need to ensure safe, livable communities throughout our state. However, we believe it is critical to clarify that as it is written today, AB 1479 will unfairly impact private non-profit organizations.

On behalf of the DLBA, we would ask AB 1479 be amended to restrict its application only to public (governmental) agencies. We look forward to continued conversations with you and your staff to help us address our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kraig Kojian', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kraig Kojian
President & CEO

cc:

Senator Patricia Bates
Senator Jim Beall
Senator Steven Bradford
Senator Jerry Hill
Senator Jim Nielsen
Senator Scott Wiener
Assemblyman Rob Bonta
Mayor Robert Garcia
DLBA Board of Directors